



MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Supervisor Kathleen Vincent - District II

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Contact: Eddie Cullen, 414-793-0347

Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors Amends Code of General Ordinances Regarding Abstention Votes

MILWAUKEE – Today, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors adopted a [resolution](#) to amend Chapter 1 of the Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances. The resolution, which was adopted by the Board on a 15-2 vote, modifies how abstention votes are treated in most cases. Under the amended code, abstentions will be treated as the member having no opinion, rather than being counted as a "no" vote. While the current code allows members to abstain, they are still recorded as a member who is present, and as such, the number of votes needed to advance the file remains the same effectively counting as "no" vote. The author of the resolution, Supervisor Kathleen Vincent made the following statement:

"I am pleased that the Board of Supervisors has taken this step to clarify the treatment of abstentions in our voting process. Abstentions are often used when a member has a conflict of interest or lacks sufficient information to make an informed decision. However, counting an abstention as a 'no' vote can skew the outcome of a vote and may not accurately reflect the views of the member," said Supervisor Vincent. "By treating abstentions as a neutral stance, we are ensuring that the voting process is fair and transparent, and that members can fully exercise their right to abstain without fear of unintended consequences. I would like to thank my colleagues on the Board for their support of this resolution."

Current Chapter 1 Ordinances in Milwaukee County require that questions are determined by a majority of Supervisors present, as opposed to those present and voting. As such, an abstention vote effectively serves as a "no" vote.

Roberts Rules of Order suggests that an approach where abstentions are not counted among the set of members to which the required voting proportion is applied is preferred.

The [resolution](#) to amend Chapter 1 of the Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances will now head to the desk of Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley.

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